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SOME THOUGHTS ON THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

PART IV

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THE DIET

As is well known the Japanese imperial diet, or parliament, is bicameral, being composed of an upper house, or house of peers, called *kizoki-in*, and a lower house, or house of representatives, called the *shugi-in*. This diet is abundantly provided for in the constitution, and in reading this document one has the feeling that Prince Ito, in directing the drafting of it, had chiefly in mind neither the United States congress nor the English parliament, but the Prussian system. The people must not be able to control the government, is a spirit written into every page of this important document.

Let us first study the structure of the house of peers. Ito calls this body the "assembly of the higher class," in distinction from the representatives who are the "commoners."

The house of peers shall, in accordance with the ordinance concerning the house of peers, be composed of the members of the imperial family, of the orders of nobility, and of those persons, who have been nominated thereto by the emperor (Constitution, Art. XXXIV).

Ito continues to say under this article,

The members of the house of peers, whether they be hereditary, elected or appointed ones, are to represent the higher grades of society. If the house of peers fulfills its functions, it will serve in a remarkable degree to preserve an equilibrium between political parties, to check the evil tendencies of irresponsible discussions,

to secure the stability of the constitution, to be an instrument for maintaining harmony between the governing and the governed¹

The purpose of the establishment of the house of peers will then dictate largely its composition. Hence we find it composed of (a) princes of the blood, (b) peers (princes and marquises sit in virtue of their right when they reach the age of twenty-five); (c) counts, viscounts and barons, elected by their respective orders; (d) imperial nominees, chosen by the emperor because of distinguished services to the country; and (e) representatives of the fifteen highest tax-payers, chosen by themselves, one from each prefecture. The age limit for classes (d) and (e) is thirty, for all others, it is twenty-five. The term is seven years for members of classes (c) and (e); all others are life-members. Members of the imperial family, however, are entitled to membership on attaining their majority. The electors in class (e) must be males, and of full thirty years of age; and the person elected must in addition be nominated by the emperor.² The composition of this house, June 20, 1917, the occasion of the thirty-ninth session, was as follows:³

Princes of the blood.....	12
Princes.....	13
Marquises.....	36
Counts.....	17
Viscounts.....	70
Barons.....	67
Imperial nominees.....	119
Highest taxpayers.....	44
	—
Total.....	378

Thus, out of 378 members, 44 came from the people, but were of that class of landed proprietors and capitalists who are naturally conservative. All the others owe their existence as members in some way to the imperial house. This fact needs to be kept in mind.

¹ Ito, *Commentaries on the constitution of Japan*, p. 72.

² *Japan Year Book*, 1917, p. 637; Ito, *Commentaries*, as above, p. 186-189.

³ *Japan Year Book*, 1917, p. 637.

The following is a list⁴ of the presiding officers of the *kizoku-in* to date:

<i>Presidents</i>	<i>Vice-Presidents</i>
1890-1891....Count Ito	1890-1891.....Count Higashikuze
1891-1896....Marquis Hashisuka	1891-1893.....Baron Hosokawa
1896-1903....Prince Konoye	1893-1894.....Marquis Saionji
1903-.....Prince Togukawa	1894-

Of the composition of the house of representatives Ito says,

The house of representatives shall be composed of members elected by the people, according to the provisions of the law of elections (Art. XXXV).⁵

The law of election of the house of representatives determines the election districts, age and qualifications of voters and candidates, and determines the methods to be followed in contested cases. A city having at least 30,000 population forms one electoral district, entitled to one representative; larger cities, one for each 130,000; and in rural sections about 130,000 people form a district, having one representative. Male Japanese citizens, of full twenty-five years, and who pay direct taxes on property or business to the extent of at least 10 yen, are entitled to the ballot, which is secret. A general election is held every four years, which is the period of membership in the lower house.⁶

At first the house had 300 members; it now has 381, owing to improvement in law of elections. The occupations of the members of the house may be of some interest, as they are distributed among agriculture, mercantile, commercial, legal, journalistic, medical, governmental, industrial and miscellaneous pursuits. Mr. Y. Okuda, former chief secretary of the house, is the compiler of this table.

⁴ See *Japan Year Book*, 1917, p. 638.

⁵ Ito, *Commentaries*, as above, 73; Law of Elections, 214-254.

⁶ The last session of the diet revised the law of elections in the direction of more liberal provisions. The age requirement remains at twenty-five years; but the minimum amount of direct national taxes is fixed at 3 yen, instead of 10 yen, and the voter must reside in the given election district at least six months continuously instead of one year, as formerly.

SESSION	AGRICULTURAL	MERCANTILE	COMMERCIAL	LAW	JOURNAL	DOCTORS	GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL	INDUSTRIAL	MISCELLANEOUS
First.....	144	12	14	24	12	3	27	10	5
Third.....	175	15	15	21	10	3	8	8	5
Sixth.....	183	15	16	30	14	5	1	6	5
Seventh.....	185	15	16	24	16	1	3	7	6
Eleventh.....	156	30	13	18	11	1	5	1	3

It is made clear in the above that the majority of the members of the sessions above named were of the agricultural class. It is also apparent that the mercantile class are on the increase, while lawyers seem not to be a popular class in the legislative halls.⁷

This table closes with 1889. Let us take a later view, from a table just recently compiled and note the changes in the nature of the membership of the diet.

	1902		1912		1917	
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent
Farmers, landowners.....	120	31.8	80	21.0	64	16.8
Banking, trade, manufacturing, mining.....	72	19.2	86	23.4	114	29.9
Barristers, journalists, authors...	58	15.4	85	22.3	120	31.5
Others.....	126	33.6	127	33.3	83	21.8
Totals.....	276	100.0	381	100.0	381	100.0

From this showing it becomes clear that the class connected with the land is gradually decreasing, while that of the business class is increasing, as is that of the lawyer and scholarly class, while the miscellaneous class is losing itself in the two classes last named. The reason for the increase of the second and third classes lies largely in their ability to purchase their way to the diet, it is claimed. But more of this later.

Possibly a lesson may be drawn from the ages of the members of the lower house. It is noted that the average age is gradually increasing. From the first election the average was 42.3; from the third, 44.3; from the fifth, 44.8; from the

⁷ *The Far East*, vol. II, 1897, pp. 149-152.

*Sessions of the diet**

NUM- BER OF SESSION	OPENED	SUSPENDED	REOPENED	DISSOLVED	CLOSED
1	November 29, 1890				March 8, 1891
2	November 26, 1891			December 25, 1891 (b)	June 15, 1892
3	May 6, 1892	May 16, 1892	May 23, 1892		March 1, 1893
4	November 29, 1892	January 23, 1893	February 7, 1893		
5	November 28, 1893	December 19, 1893	December 29, 1893 (a)	December 30, 1893 (c)	
6	May 15, 1894			June 2, 1894 (d)	
7	October 18, 1894				October 22, 1894
8	December 24, 1894				March 27, 1895
9	December 28, 1895				March 29, 1896
10	December 25, 1896	February 15, 1896	February 25, 1896		March 25, 1897
11	December 24, 1897				
12	May 19, 1898	June 7, 1898	June 10, 1898	December 25, 1897 (e)	
13	December 3, 1898			June 10, (1898 (f)	March 10, 1899
14	November 22, 1899				February 24, 1900
15	December 25, 1900				March 25, 1901
16	December 10, 1901	February 27, 1901	March 10, 1901		March 10, (1902 (g)
17	December 9, 1902	December 19, 1902	December 28, 1902	December 28, 1908 (h)	
18	May 12, 1903	May 21, 1903	May 23, 1903		June 5, 1903
19	December 10, 1903			December 11, 1903 (i)	
20	March 20, 1904				March 30, 1904
21	November 30, 1904				February 28, 1905
22	December 28, 1905				March 28, 1906
23	December 28, 1906				March 28, 1907
24	December 28, 1907				March 27, 1908 (j)
25	December 25, 1908				March 25, 1909
26	December 24, 1909				March 24, 1910
27	December 23, 1910				March 23, 1911
28	December 27, 1911				March 26, 1912 (k)
29	August 23, 1912				August 26, 1912 (l)

30	December 27, 1912	January 21, 1913	February 4, 1913		Ma ch 27, 1913
31	December 26, 1913				March 26, 1914
32	May 5, 1914				May 8, 1914 (m)
33	June 22, 1914				June 29, 1914 (n)
34	September 4, 1914				September 10, 1914 (o)
35	December 7, 1914				
36	May 20, 1915				June 10, 1915 (q)
37	December 1, 1915				February 29, 1916
38	December 27, 1916				
39	June 22, 1917				July 15, 1917
40	December 25, 1917				March 28, 1918
41	December 25, 1918				March 31, 1919

* Corrected from the diet calendar through kindness of Hon. Saburo Shimada, M.P.

(a) Suspended four days but dissolved on 30th.

(b) Extra election, February 15, 1892.

(c) Extra election March 1, 1894.

(d) Extra election September 1, 1894.

(e) Extra election March 15, 1898.

(f) Extra election August 10, 1898.

(g) Ordinary election August 10, 1902.

(h) Extra election March 1, 1913.

(i) Extra election March 1, 1904.

(j) Election May 15, 1908.

(k) Ordinary election May 15, 1912.

(l) Special session.

(m) Special session.

(n) Special session.

(o) Special session, war.

(p) Extra election March 15, 1915.

(q) Special session.

(r) Want of confidence vote.

seventh, 46.1; from the ninth, 47.1; from the tenth, 48.1 years, and from the thirteenth 51 years. This is in part due to the fact that more of the older members are now being returned to successive sessions of the diet. The following six men have been continuously members of the lower house from the first session of the diet:

Inukai, *Ki*, Kokuminto leader from Okayama-ken.
 Kono, *Hironaka*, Kensekai leader, from Fukushima-ken.
 Minoura, *Katsudo*, Kensekai leader from Oita-ken.
 Motoda, *Hajime*, Sei-yu-kai leader from Oita-ken.
 Osaki, *Yukio*, Kensekai from Miye-ken.
 Shimada, *Saburo*, from Yokohama.^s

There are instructive lessons to be drawn from the table shown on page 162. It will be seen from this table that during the early years of parliamentary life, the suspensions and dissolutions were frequent. These were the days when the people, eager to have a part in their own real government, were trying their strength against the remaining influences of feudalism. In the first session the representatives were lamb-like—were getting ready to contend for larger recognition by the government. As soon as agitation began, in the second session, the government dissolved the diet. This only stirred more deeply the determination of the representatives of the people to fight it out with the bureaucrats, and the next ten years reveal, as is clearly seen from the table, a steady contest with little apparent progress. I say “apparent,” for while the people uniformly met with defeat, for reasons which will appear later, the fact is that during all this time the politicians were strengthening by exercise their war sinews, and, on the other hand, the leaders of the government were becoming convinced that they must have party backing in the diet in order to do business at all. A reference to the table of imperial cabinets will help here. It was the conservative peers and their hatred of party government which defeated the fourth Ito cabinet, because Ito had found himself compelled to resort to a trial of party government, himself as party leader, in order to the carrying on of government business. This was an admission by the strong man him-

^s *Japan Year Book*, 1917, p. 640, furnishes the figures above given.

self of the necessity of considering the people. Ito had changed. The Russo-Japanese war united the nation, caused the burial of political disputes, and permitted the first Katsura ministry to continue the longest of any on record. But, the war over, it was the people who overthrew the third Katsura ministry, after only two months in the saddle, thus making definite advance during these years.

The bureaucrats had banked upon the constitution of the diet to protect bureaucracy. They had thought that they here possessed the means for holding these frisky young politicians well within bounds.⁹ The quiet years in the table of sessions of the diet mean preparation along different lines of attack, as we shall later see. That is a story for another section. Meanwhile note the gradual rising of the people against intrenched feudalism.

The presidents and vice-presidents of the *shugi-in* have uniformly been able leaders, and are to date as follows:

Presidents and vice-presidents of the Shugi-in

SESSION	PRESIDENT	VICE-PRESIDENT
1, 2	Nakashima, Noboyuki	Tsuda Mainichi
3, 4	Hoshi, Toru	Sone Arasuke and Baron Kusumoto
5	Kusumoto, Baron	Abe, Iwane
6	Kusumoto, Baron	Kataoka, Kenkichi
7-9	Kusumoto, Baron	Shimada, Saburo
10-11	Hatoyama, Kazuo	Shimada, Saburo*
12-17	Kataoka, Kenkichi	Motoda, Hajime
18	Kataoka, Kenkichi	Sugita, T.
19	Kono, H.	Sugita, T.
20, 21	Matsuda	Minoura K.
22-24	Sugita, T.	Minoura K.
25-28	Haseba, S.	Koezuka R.
29-30	O-oka, Ikuzo	Seki, N.
31	Ooka; Haseba; Oku, H.	Seki, N.
32-35	Oku, H.	Seki, N.
36	Shimada, Saburo	Hanai, Dr. T.
37	Shimada, Saburo	Hanai, and Hayami, S.
38	Shimada, Saburo	Hayami, Seiji.
39	O-oka, Ikuzo	Hamada, Kunimatsu
40	O-oka, Ikuzo	Hamada, K.

* Mr. Shimada served to the end of the twelfth session, Mr. Motoda through the thirteenth to seventeenth sessions.

⁹ Uyehara, p. 164, Note, etc., *Japan Weekly Mail*, Vol. XV, pp. 246, 311, 479; Vol. XVI, pp. 777; Vol. XIV, pp. 57, 430, 560, 621, 646. All valuable editorials covering this stormy period.

We must go still further in this analysis in order to understand, from other points of view, the influence of reactionary forces upon the nation's political development. In the nearly thirty years of parliamentary life already passed in Japan, there have been thirteen general elections, as follows:

*General elections, regular and special**

ELECTION	DATE	KIND	NUMBER OF ELECTORS	VOTERS PER 1000 POPULATION	FRANCHISE HOLDERS PER 1 DIET MEMBER
1	July 1, 1890	Regular	442,272	11.10	1,474
2	January 15, 1892	Special	434,594	10.7	1,449
3	March 1, 1894	Special	436,113	10.5	1,454
4	September 1, 1894	Special	459,373	11.1	1,531
5	March 15, 1898	Special	453,637	10.5	1,212
6	August 10, 1898	Special	502,243	10.4	1,674
7	August 10, 1902†	Regular	982,868	21.6	2,614
8	March 1, 1903	Special	958,322	17.10	2,549
9	March 1, 1904†	Special	762,445	15.7	2,012
10	May 15, 1908†	Regular	1,597,594	32.5	4,215
11	May 15, 1912	Regular	1,506,143	29.5	3,927
12	March 25, 1915†	Special	1,576,201	29.3	4,137
13	April 20, 1917	Special	1,469,994	26.6	3,858

* This table is the work of Mr. S. Terada, Chief Secretary of the *shugi-in*. Many lists published in English, even in Japan, are wrong, because they contain serious errors.

† Increase 1902 due to lowering property qualification; that of 1908, to extension to Hokkaido. Decrease 1904, due to lowering the land-tax.

Now mark the effect of attempted bureaucratic control of the elections. By severely limiting the franchise at the beginning, it resulted that slightly more than 1 per cent of the population acquired the right to vote. Unlimited franchise would *then* have been revolutionary; the people were not ready for it. But while the literary and property qualifications insured a representation in the diet of the stable elements of the community, they also, by their very nature, excluded many of the most scholarly, progressive and morally worthy elements, because these latter elements generally were not possessors of landed estates or large inherited properties. Again, the representatives in the lower house were looked upon and spoken of as "commoners," in

distinction from those of the upper house, who were the "higher class."¹⁰ These terms meant a feudalistic attitude. The masses thought that the granting of a constitution and a parliament meant the removal of this attitude; the bureaucrats were loath to surrender their inherited centuries-old power; and when, in the second session of the diet the "commoners" sought to make use of the power believed by them to be theirs under the constitution, the bureaucratic government summarily dissolved the diet. A ten-year contest passed before the first concession on the franchise was secured, the effect of which appears in 1902. But the government in its anxiety to control the situation, took a step in the second election, February 15, 1892, in which it signally disgraced itself and weakened the moral tone of parliamentary life for a hundred years.

The government thereupon at once dissolved the diet, and, under the leadership of Shinagawa, tried to gain the majority by interfering with the elections through the prefectural authorities and all other available channels. Bribes were given to voters out of a secret fund, besides which they were intimidated by ruffians instigated by police authorities. This resulted in a reign of terror throughout the country, under which not only government officials, but all bankers and commercial men in any way connected with the government, as well as all other business folk under its indirect control, found it impossible to cast their votes of their own free will. Even worse conditions prevailed in Kochi and Saga, then provincial headquarters of the two opposition parties, and in certain northern prefectures, where armed mobs paraded the streets in broad daylight, with the result that many were killed and wounded. But, in spite of these endeavors, made at the cost of peace and order, the outcome of the elections was still a majority for the opposition.

After this interference with the elections by the government, the corrupt practice of purchasing votes by means of junketing and money was introduced. Comparing the first election in 1890 with those that followed after 1892, the first was unattended by violence, and the voters prided themselves upon the small amount of expenditure involved. Now it is entirely different. The custom that still prevails of relying upon pecuniary influence to secure election is the fruit of the abuse of government authority in 1892.¹¹

¹⁰ Ito, *Commentaries*, Art. 33, p. 69.

¹¹ Okuma, *Fifty years of New Japan*, Vol. I, p. 166-7; Lay, "History of Political Parties," *Transactions Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. 30, p. 405.

From the consequences of that act Japan is but slowly recovering. The politicians soon learned that they could use the money trick taught them by the government, and they have ever since been prone to rely upon "filthy lucre." Nor has the government records since that day been such as to cause unalloyed pride. Mr. Uyehara declares that ten years ago an election cost a successful candidate about 3000 yen.¹² The claim is now popularly made that the average cost of a seat to a candidate is close to 10,000 yen. It is also claimed by those best qualified to know that this corruption of elections is on the increase.¹³ The great business houses of Mitsui and Mitsu-Bishi are said to liberally support the party leaders financially in their contention with bureaucracy.¹⁴ A multitude of still other witnesses might here be called, following the above list of elections in order, as some writers have done; but the above will suffice to show the folly of attempting in this way to restrain the natural political desires of the people; and, in fact, a better moral tone already begins to appear. In 1917, the government caused to be posted in public places and to be heralded through the press to all the people a list of "election don'ts" which surely will be read with interest by Americans:

Election don'ts

1. Don't forget that the voters must go in person.
2. Don't accept money, cheques and other presents.
3. Don't accept invitations to any sort of entertainment.
4. Don't vote, nor go about canvassing, tempted by prospects of a public or private position.
5. Don't accept invitations to go in any conveyance to or from the voting place at other people's expense; nor let them pay your fares or tips or lodging expenses for you.
6. Don't let your judgment be warped by considerations of agrarian interests or pecuniary relations.

¹² Uyehara, as above, p. 273.

¹³ *Herald of Asia*, February 24, 1917, p. 676; April 21, 1917, p. 99, 109; June 16, 1917, p. 355; 16,149 cases reported in 1917.

¹⁴ *Herald of Asia*, April 7, 1917, p. 42.

7. Don't threaten, kidnap, or deceive voters, nor interfere with traffic.

8. Don't spread unfounded reports in the hope of frustrating the success of candidates.

9. Don't collect many people, beat gongs and drums, display large banners, and make other demonstrations.

10. Don't carry firearms, spears, swords, clubs, and other dangerous objects.¹⁵

Note the importance of the number ten, like the Decalogue. Prosecution, fine and imprisonment follow conviction. Here follows the list of offenders by elections.¹⁶

ELECTION	OFFENDERS	ELECTION	OFFENDERS
1	286	2	323
3 and 4	1,153	5 and 6	1,029
7	1,861	8	1,996
9	284	10	1,519
11	3,772	12	7,298
13	24,339		

These figures were supplied by Mr. Sakae Terada, Chief Secretary of the Imperial Diet.

The numbers given for elections 1 to 10 contain cases not yet fully determined.

Those given in elections 11 to 13 represent convictions determined.

In cases of elections 3 and 4, 5 and 6, the figures cover two elections per year.

In addition to the above figures many men were accused of violations of the election laws, but figures showing results are not obtainable at this time.

The reader may be inclined to ask, "Are the Japanese generally so untrustworthy that they cannot be trusted with political power?" I believe that every thoughtful American, every citizen of whatever civilized country, knowing the situation here and viewing it dispassionately, must answer with an emphatic negative. The people are naturally reliable, liberty-loving, loyal and aspiring. They possess a deep respect for the officer of the law, and endure official oppression—a Prussianized political system—as no

¹⁵ *Herald of Asia*, February 24, 1917, p. 675.

¹⁶ Personal notes by the writer.

Anglo-Saxon would ever do. *They are steadily resenting an out-of-date feudalism*, which must give way to better methods, and are improving in spite of serious handicaps.

Take but a few illustrations here of the political handicaps under which the representatives of the people are placed. In discussing projects of law in the diet, government bills take the precedence, and thus the government can, and sometimes does, control legislation. Efforts of the members to promote their own bills or those originating with the people are often frustrated. As the government can at its pleasure dissolve the diet, and so defeat any bill they may dislike, it becomes possible for them to control legislation in this way also.¹⁷

The judicial system of Japan also readily lends itself to manipulation by the government in power, so that in this another way bureaucracy may defeat the ends of justice and forefend itself against the risings of popular rights.¹⁸

Members of the diet have a constitutional right to question publicly the members of the cabinet concerning government business; but since they have no means of compelling an answer, and no ultimate control over the cabinet, the provision has less practical and positive value than might at first appear.¹⁹

The houses of the diet have the right to address the crown, and herein lies a privilege of real value, for four dissolutions out of seven have grown out of addresses impeaching the cabinet. But even these addresses the cabinet can defeat.²⁰

So closely does the constitution and the law of the houses tie up the liberties of the houses, that the diet cannot easily make or amend rules for its own government.²¹

As the two houses have coördinate powers and rights, the conservative, bureaucratic peers can defeat all projects intended to increase democratic tendencies.²²

¹⁷ Oyehara, as above, p. 152.

¹⁸ R. Masujima, LL.D., in *New East*, November, 1918, p. 503. *Important.*

¹⁹ Ito, *Commentaries*, as above, Art. LIV, p. 91, Chap. III, p. 68. Oyehara as above, p. 153.

²⁰ Oyehara as above, 156. Especially note on President Hironaka.

²¹ Oyehara as above, 159.

²² Oyehara as above, 159-162.

It must be borne in mind that the members of the upper house are drawn in no real sense from the people, but come in larger measure from the "higher classes," upon nomination and advice of the ministers. Already the feeling is spreading that the upper house is a piece of useless machinery, and one of the new manifestations of democracy in Japan is the fact that the people are saying this publicly.²³ This change in the character of the membership of the upper house grows directly out of the financial and industrial changes which the new age is bringing to Japan, thus lifting into positions of comparative wealth and social influence members of the so-called middle and lower classes. These men are now among the highest tax payers of their several communities, and so eligible to become members of the upper house. But having had little or no training in political affairs, these *narikin*, or suddenly rich, people cannot be expected at the start to prove valuable political agents. Time will be needed for them also to attain a condition of practical usefulness. There must come a change. The upper house must either be popularized and become able to work in harmony with the growing political ability of the lower house, or it must lose its legal standing of equal authority with that house. The age has little patience with effete bureaucracies.

It is the theory of the government that the members of the upper house shall not form political parties, and as a matter of fact they have not quite done this; but they have formed clubs, somewhat along the lines of social classes in the body, and these clubs serve as media for the expression of political influence. These clubs or groups are:²⁴

Political groups in upper house

Kenkyukai.....	108	Doyo-kai.....	29
Chawa-kai.....	61	Koyo-club.....	33
Independents (nominal)...	63	Koin-club	13
Independents (real).....	55	Princes of the blood.....	12

²³ Uyehara as above, pp. 163, 164. *Herald of Asia*, July 13, 1918, p. 472; October 19, 1918, p. 91. The last is by Baron Ogimachi, one of the nobility.

²⁴ *Japan Year Book*, 1917, p. 638; *Herald of Asia*, June 22, 1918, p. 395; *Japan Times*, June 6, 1910. "Peers and Partyism."

This long and interesting battle on the part of the diet with the reactionary government, the frequent and repeated defeats of the people by these conservative forces, has in some quarters led to discouragement with the attempt at parliamentary institutions in Japan. Those already possessing the elective franchise have lacked a sense of duty to the country in the exercise of their rights, and have either not voted at all, or have been ready to pledge their votes upon receipt of the slightest favors, or of contemptible bribes.²⁵

While the voting is secret and the poles carefully guarded by police, this does not make the voting either sure or intelligent. The candidates establish on polling day booths along the street adjacent, and I have seen a voter on departing from the polling place announcing to each of the booths in turn that he has voted for the candidate favored by each such booth. A voter of this city has told me that this custom is general. Neither the government nor the party leaders have made any adequate plans for the enlightenment of the electorate, and this for reasons which will be explained under political parties. Foreigners have more than once committed the mistake of failing to sympathize with the government and people in view of the problems they together have to work out, as did Sir Rutherford Alcock in 1864.²⁶

The sessions of the diet, at first characterized by much debate, and accompanied with occasional attempts at oratory in a foreign style, have latterly settled down to more quiet manners, the lower house meeting as a body on alternate days, as a rule, the other days being devoted to committee meetings, in which the main questions are largely threshed out. The public sessions have thus become comparatively tame.

²⁵ Uyehara as above, p. 272; *Japan Weekly Mail*, Vol. XIII, p. 319; Vol. XIV, pp. 51, 430.

²⁶ Treat, Dr. P. J., *Early Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Japan*, 1853-1865. Pp. 315-326. A most valuable work covering the period indicated.

But this is not the time for discouragement over parliamentary institutions in Japan.²⁷ Feudalism must be thoroughly uprooted, and the people come to take an active *part in the building of their new national structure*. They have knotty problems to solve in the status of the upper house, in the terms of the constitution, in making the cabinet dependent upon the diet, in the organization of their political parties, and in the education of the electorate; but these changes for the better are bound to come; and of this more later.

(The next article will deal with political parties and tendencies taking careful note of the rising democratic tendencies in the life of the people.)

²⁷ *Herald of Asia*, February 24, 1917, p. 676.